

***Iowa Outdoors***  
**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
**www.iowadnr.com**

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**Nov. 10, 2003**

1. Anglers Pulled in Yellow Bass in Record Numbers
2. Pheasant Hunting Injuries Continue to Mount
3. Drivers Urged to Use Caution – Deer are on the Move
4. Natural Resource Commission to Meet Nov. 13 in Des Moines

**ANGLERS PULLED IN YELLOW BASS IN RECORD NUMBERS**

CLEAR LAKE – The open water fishing season is drawing to a close at Clear Lake, capping a record year for yellow bass harvest. Anglers harvested an estimated 227,000 yellow bass during 2003, shattering the previous record of 160,000, set in 1995.

“There was never a bad month to catch yellow bass,” said Jim Wahl, fisheries biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, stationed at Clear Lake. “There were so many fish cleaned at the McIntosh Woods fish cleaning station, that it would plug up once a week.”

The yellow bass averaged 9 inches in length and catches of 100 fish per day was not uncommon. Wahl said anglers would make numerous trips to the lake over the summer to catch this good eating, scrappy panfish.

Wahl and his staff conducted fish surveys this summer to study the yellow bass spawn, and he said the species had a record hatch this year, which should continue to provide good fishing opportunities for anglers and a good food base for the predators in the system. Yellow bass are the primary forage base for walleyes, muskies, northern pike and channel catfish.

Yellow bass can be a problem in smaller lakes, where the fish can become stunted, less desirable to anglers and cause the lake’s fish population to get out of balance. But in a larger system, like Clear Lake, they can do well.

“Our walleye fishing slowed in July and August and I suspect that is because of the hatch,” Wahl said. “We need to continue to have a good harvest of yellow bass to

keep the good growth rates we're seeing in these fish. Without the good harvest, the chance of stunted fish increases."

As the lake freezes over and ice fishing begins, Wahl expects the yellow bass harvest bonanza to continue through the winter and he looks for another good year in 2004.

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## **PHEASANT HUNTING INJURIES CONTINUE TO MOUNT**

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has investigated 12 pheasant hunting injuries this fall, including several involving non-residents. That is an increase over 2001 and 2002, when the DNR investigated five incidents in each of those years.

"The people you choose to hunt with are your family and friends," said Rod Slings, recreational safety program supervisor for the DNR. "Hunting is not only a social activity, but an activity that requires you to make decisions. The wrong decision can result in disaster."

The primary cause for these injuries is a lack of muzzle control and target fixation, Slings said. "They are fixated on the bird, and not what is behind or around it," he said.

Pheasant hunters have been patiently waiting for the bird numbers to come back, and many will spend more time in the field than they had in previous years.

"As long as the weather remains good, there will continue to be good numbers of hunters out there," he said. "I want to encourage everyone to hunt safe throughout the season."

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## **DRIVERS URGED TO USE CAUTION – DEER ARE ON THE MOVE**

DES MOINES – The fall deer breeding season, known as the rut, is underway, and the normally cautious animals will be ignoring their natural instincts and will be moving more frequently during all times of the day.

During the rut, the DNR cautions drivers to use extra caution and be on the lookout for deer crossing the roads. "Slow down, especially around deer habitat; timber and creeks or rivers, for example, and drive within the range of your headlights," said

Alan Foster, spokesman for the Iowa DNR. "Deer tend to travel in groups, so if there is one, there could be more."

If you encounter a deer on the road, brake firmly, steer to maintain control and top as soon as possible.

"Be extra cautious around dawn and dusk and avoid traveling during those times if at all possible," Foster said.

Each year, an estimated 12,000 to 13,000 deer vehicle collisions occur in Iowa.

**For more information, contact Foster at 515-281-8874.**

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## **NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION TO MEET NOV. 13 IN DES MOINES**

DES MOINES - The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will meet at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, Nov. 13, in the fourth floor conference room, Wallace State Office Building, in Des Moines. The meeting is open to the public.

Members of the NRC are Joan Schneider, Randy Duncan, Paul Christiansen, Carol Kramer, William Sullivan, Richard Francisco and Janice Marcantonio. The DNR Director is Jeffrey Vonk.

The following is the agenda for the November meeting.

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes of Oct. 9
- Director's Remarks
- Construction Projects
- Land Acquisition
  - Big Sioux Wildlife Management Area, Lyon County – Paul and Joyce Lee
  - Lake Darling State Park, Washington County – Steinbeck
  - Lake Darling State Park, Washington County – Wright
  - Lake Darling State Park, Washington County – Adrian
  - Stephens State Forest, Lucas County – Sutton
- Waubonsie State Park Land Exchange – Tabled
- Management Agreements
  - Union Mills Access, Mahaska County
  - Des Moines River Access, Van Buren County
- Lake Manawa State Park – Electric Utility Easement

- Five-Year Parks and Institutional Roads Capital Plan – Fiscal Year 2005 – 2009
- Conservation and Recreation Donations
- Final Rule – Chapter 81, Sport Fishing Rule
- Final Rule – Chapter 82, Commercial Fishing
- Final Rule – Chapter 87, Mussel Regulations
- Final Rule – Chapter 15 – General License Regulations
- Final Rule – Chapter 77 – Threatened and Endangered Plant and Animal Species
- Notice of Intended Action – Chapter 94, Nonresident Deer Hunting
- Final Rule – Chapter 98, Wild Turkey Spring Hunting
- Deer Management Plan for Iowa City
- Final Rule – Chapter 61, State Park and Recreation Areas
- Contract Agreement with City of Spirit Lake
- Timber Sale – Upper Iowa Wildlife Unit
- NRC Meeting Locations for 2004
- General Discussion
- Items for Next Meeting – Dec. 11, in Des Moines

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